

**WATER RESOURCES BOARD  
INTER-OFFICE MEMO**

To: Public Drinking Water Protection Committee  
From: Beverly O’Keefe, Supervising Planner  
Date: September 26, 2005  
Subject: **Drought Update: Current Water Conditions**

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**BACKGROUND:** Pursuant to State Guide Plan Element 724: The Rhode Island Drought Management Plan, the Water Resources Board is required to assess water conditions monthly. Staff has assembled climate information from a variety of sources to monitor the potential for drought conditions in Rhode Island.

The second meeting of the Drought Steering Committee was held on Wednesday, September 14, 2005 (Attachment A). Reports were received by the NOAA National Weather Service and the US Geological Survey as well as the RI Department of Environmental Management, Providence Water supply Board, Kingston Water District, Newport Water Department, and the agricultural community. After discussion, the committee supported the motion to maintain the “normal” condition status. The committee scheduled a third meeting to be held Wednesday, October 12, 2005.

The **NOAA National Weather Service (NWS):** September 14, 2005 Hydrologic Outlook shows localized heavy rainfall has brought some relief for southern New England (Attachment B). Precipitation through September was generally normal with preliminary monthly figures on September 21, 2005 revealing improving conditions:

Kent	2.92”
Bristol	2.00”
Newport	2.00”
Washington	2.75”
Providence	1.50”

The **NOAA Drought Severity Index** ending October 1, 2005 shows a near normal conditions for Rhode Island. The **Crop Moisture Index** values for Rhode Island, period ending 24 Sep shows an slightly dry/favorably moist (see Attachment C). An updated report, if available, will be distributed at the meeting.

The **USGS Water Conditions Statement** reports groundwater conditions throughout Rhode Island ending August was generally **above normal** (Attachment D). One new low ground water level was measured in the Exeter 554 well. Surface water flows at the end of August 2005 were generally below normal for all of Rhode Island. The Scituate Reservoir on September 26, 2005 was measured at 274.60 FEET (73.7 % of capacity) (Attachment E).

**DISCUSSION**

Water conditions for Rhode Island were generally normal during the month of September with a decrease in temperature and increase in rainfall. Water conditions will continue to be monitored over the next month.

**RECOMMENDATIONS :** Information only.

**ATTACHMENT A:** Drought Steering Committee Agenda

**ATTACHMENT B:** NOAA NWS Hydrologic Report <http://www.erh.noaa.gov/box/fcsts/BOSESFBOX.html>

**ATTACHMENT C:** RI Precipitation Report August 2005

<http://www.erh.noaa.gov/box/fcsts/BOSCLIPVD.html>

NOAA NCEP Palmer Drought Severity & Crop Moisture Index - August 2005

[http://www.epc.ncep.noaa.gov/products/analysis\\_monitoring/regional\\_monitoring/palmer.gif](http://www.epc.ncep.noaa.gov/products/analysis_monitoring/regional_monitoring/palmer.gif)

**ATTACHMENT D:** USGS Water Conditions Statement – August 2005

[http://ma.water.usgs.gov/water\\_const/water\\_conditions\\_200507.htm](http://ma.water.usgs.gov/water_const/water_conditions_200507.htm)

[http://ma.water.usgs.gov/current\\_cond/cwrc\\_gw.htm](http://ma.water.usgs.gov/current_cond/cwrc_gw.htm)

[http://ma.water.usgs.gov/water/water\\_s.htm](http://ma.water.usgs.gov/water/water_s.htm)

**ATTACHMENT E:** Providence Water supply Board Scituate Reservoir Elevation

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